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For DDI

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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC #03276-86
11 July 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Fritz W. Ermarth
National Intelligence Officer for USSR

SUBJECT: The "Ogarkov Line" and US Strategy

1. The attached draft is something you might want to read at leisure or whenever you become seized with the implications of Ogarkov's strategic pronouncements. [redacted] 25X1
[redacted] What my paper says about Ogarkov is based purely on his 25X1
published writings, plus general horse sense about Soviet strategy.)

2. In any event, you should now the background of this paper. Over a year ago, an informal group led by Andy Marshall (plus me, Larry, Odom, Gordon Negus, now including Rich Haver of ONI) was organized to shmooze with Henry Kissinger, as PFIAB member and Presidential advisor, on what we have learned over the years about Soviet strategy and calculations of military balances. Andy has called us together occasionally to keep up the dialogue. This past spring, this group began a round of Saturday Morning Seminars with Admiral Poindexter and his key staffers to continue the same enterprise. Several briefings, mostly from DOD intelligence components, have been presented. They have dealt with very compartmented insights into Soviet military planning and operations. I've been asked to do something on Soviet crisis management on 19 July.

3. Throughout all this there has been a rising interest in the Ogarkov Line on decreasing the nuclear emphasis, heightening emphasis on hi-tech non-nuclear forces, etc. Some months ago, I made the argument that, while the Ogarkov Line has many threatening and challenging features, if you step back for a macro-look, it presents a peerless opportunity for the US to develop a counterstrategy for long-term competition. Andy asked me to start a draft paper to develop this reasoning.

4. The attached is the result, so far. The idea is to create a persuasive argument and framework that can be used by this Administration to refine and institutionalize its strategic intitiatives, and some new ones not yet taken, for the long term.

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5. Andy hasn't figured out yet how he wants to proceed beyond working over this paper, which the original group plans to do in a few weeks. He'd like to get some sort of process going within DOD, under Ikle, to give better shape to the last two years of this Administration's defense planning. Poindexter is clearly another important audience; and the Saturday morning meetings have kicked around some of these ideas. Meanwhile, the NSC is revising NSDD-32 on US "grand strategy". The process looks meaningless so far, but maybe the Ogarkov story can help make it serious.

6. Till now, this paper has only gone to Larry, Bill Odom, Gordon Negus, Rich Haver, and Andy Marshall. I'm sending one to Doug MacEachin. At a minimum, this effort has helped me get on top of the themes we shall have to treat in doing an NIE on Soviet military policy and strategy this fall.

Fritz W. Ermarth

cc: Director/SOVA

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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

18 June 1986

NOTE FOR: Andrew Marshall
Director, Net Assessments

FROM: Fritz W. Ermarth
National Intelligence Officer for USSR

SUBJECT: Draft Paper

1. Here is a first cut at a paper on the Ogarkov Line and its implications for US long-term competition strategy. I think it's pretty complete on what the Soviet side of the story is. It is much less adequate on implications and possibilities for the US. It suggests numerous themes and issues for further examination. Many others will have to be suggested. The paper tails off at the end with some topic headings for us to talk about and perhaps fill in.

2. This paper is really more of a source document than a draft of the product we should be aiming for by, say, the end of the summer. I suggest that you circulate it to the other players of our group (I'll give a copy to Larry). Then we should have a group session to fill in some of the blanks and to outline thematically a much briefer final product, with some of this material on Ogarkov's line as an annex.

3. All in all, I'd say the most powerful ideas to emerge from this so far are these four:

> Ogarkov proposes to concentrate Soviet military modernization resources on a limited, but costly and demanding, sector of Soviet military power, because it offers the highest payoff in usable military power. We have the opportunity to force or encourage the spreading or squandering of Soviet resources.
>
> To counter Soviet strategy we must work to keep up the credibility of nuclear deterrence, warfighting concepts, and programs. This will require some changes in our arms control rhetoric at least, if not in our real objectives and programs.

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Soviet strategy evolution is apparently sensitive to a tendency for operational dominance to shift in the direction of defensive capabilities for technological reasons. This applies at the intercontinental and theater levels, to both strike and offensive maneuver forces. This is worrisome to them if it leads to strategic shifts. We may be able to make a credible case that this shift fundamentally favors the West.

The Ogarkov Line materially heightens the strategic value of economic/social mobilization potential during war. The Arsenal of Democracy has latent advantages the Soviets are sensitive to and which we can exploit.

4. I propose to send copies of this to the DCI and DDCI with a note on what we are trying to do.

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Fritz W. Ermarth

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